

# **Citizens Working Group Recommendations to the Joint Cities Working Team on the Stevens Creek Trail Feasibility Study**

The Citizens Working Group, comprised of three citizens from each city, was selected by the Joint Cities Working Team (JCWT) to assist agency staff, the consultant team and policy representatives to prepare a feasibility study for connecting the completed segments of the Stevens Creek Trail in Mountain View and Cupertino. The Citizens Working Group reviewed technical feasibility findings including ownership and land availability information, habitat and wildlife data, geologic and hydrological materials, assessments of on-street conditions, institutional opportunities and constraints, and cost estimates over the course of two years. The Citizens Working Group members were provided a summary of themes from community input meetings held in May and June 2015 and were provided copies of all written comments submitted by the public on the draft feasibility study report. Their volunteer efforts have culminated in these recommendations discussed at a meeting of the group on June 17, 2015. These recommendations set a long-range vision for the development of the trail. A map is also attached that shows the preferred trail alignment and key connecting routes.

## **Citizens Working Group Recommendations**

### **1. Alignment Themes**

- Extend the Stevens Creek Trail as a pedestrian/bike path as far south as possible to keep the trail separated from automobile traffic to the greatest extent possible in order to create a family-friendly and recreational route that enhances the bicycle and pedestrian networks of the four cities.
- Enhance the habitat along the creek corridor with the development of the trail.
- For existing bike routes that are in the area but not part of the recommended alignment modest safety improvements (such as adding sharrows, other street markings, and/or additional signage) should be considered.

### **2. Recommendation Details by Segment**

#### **a. Dale/Heatherstone Pedestrian Overcrossing to Fremont Avenue**

- The preferred alignment and top priority is to extend the Stevens Creek Trail through the 22 acres of open space along State Route 85 from Dale/Heatherstone to Fremont Avenue. The trail should incorporate habitat enhancements and the 22 acres along the creek corridor should be managed as passive open space.
- Develop the project in phases, as needed, to construct as soon as possible. Suggested phases include Dale/Heatherstone to Remington and Remington to Fremont Avenue.
- Include a neighborhood access point at Remington Avenue.
- Continue to explore the potential for an overcrossing over Highway 85 to provide a connection to Mountain View High School, which would provide

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an east-west connection between Mountain View and Sunnyvale via Remington Drive. This is the lowest priority feature in this segment.

- The preferred crossing of Fremont Avenue is a pedestrian/bike overcrossing to Bernardo Avenue to continue the separated pedestrian/bike path.
- A second connection to Fremont Avenue is also recommended via a trail underpass beneath State Route 85 connecting to Fremont Avenue west of the Highway 85 interchange adjacent to the southbound off-ramp. A preferred alternative to make this connection is to pursue a trail easement along the creek through the parking lot located at 1195 W. Fremont Avenue (current Stanford medical office).
- When the Fremont Avenue bridge over Stevens Creek is replaced in the future, consider a trail underpass to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Fremont Avenue and provide an access point to the trail.

### **b. Fremont Avenue to Homestead Road**

- If a pedestrian overcrossing at Fremont Avenue is considered feasible, the preferred alignment to extend the Stevens Creek Trail is a separated off-street pedestrian/bike path along the soundwall on Bernardo Avenue. This pedestrian/bike path would continue the experience of the trail by providing a route free from automobile traffic.
- The feasibility study indicates that a road reconfiguration of Bernardo is necessary to support the off-street pedestrian/bike path. Conduct traffic and parking studies to determine the feasibility of either one-way traffic or two-way traffic with loss of parking.
- If a separated pedestrian/bike path were not feasible on Bernardo, the second choice would be to modestly enhance Bernardo, Belleville and Fallen Leaf streets with bicycle safety improvements and wayfinding signage to the trail. None of these on-street routes would be designated as the Stevens Creek Trail. Even if the off-street route on Bernardo is considered feasible, evaluate bicycle safety improvements that could be made with modest improvements to Belleville and Fallen Leaf.
- Connect the pedestrian/bike path on Bernardo to the pedestrian/bike path on the north side of Homestead Road in Los Altos. The Homestead Road path currently extends from Stevens Creek west to El Sereno Avenue near the Grant Road/Foothill Expressway intersection. Continue to explore either a) widening the existing Homestead Road Bridge over State Route 85 or b) placing a new pedestrian/bike bridge parallel and just to the north of the Homestead Road bridge and making path improvements in Sunnyvale west from State Route 85 interchange to Stevens Creek to provide for a continuous off-street path. Extension of the Homestead Road path could proceed as a

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- stand-alone project intended to improve walking and bicycling access to Cupertino Middle School and Homestead High School.
- Bicycle safety improvements to existing on-street bike lanes on Mary Avenue and Fremont Avenue.

### **c. Homestead Road to Stevens Creek Boulevard**

- A new grade-separated crossing of Interstate 280 is recommended to provide access to the Stevens Creek Trail on a direct route along low-volume, low-speed streets. The potential grade-separated crossing alternatives in order of preference include:
  - i. The preferred crossing is a trail underpass beneath Interstate 280 using one of the existing tunnels that convey the Stevens Creek flows to San Francisco Bay. This option is potentially technically feasible but was previously not supported by Caltrans. The use of one of the tunnels should continue to be pursued as a long-term solution to extending the trail south. The tunnel route would connect Barranca Drive to Madera Drive. The trail would use Madera Drive to Phar Lap Drive to access Stevens Creek Blvd., where it would connect to the existing trail in Cupertino.
  - ii. An alternate choice is a pedestrian overcrossing that spans both Interstate 280 and the UPRR tracks connecting Peninsular Avenue to Madera Drive.
  - iii. Another option to consider if the previous two alternatives for crossing I-280 were considered infeasible is a pedestrian overcrossing that spans only Interstate 280 connecting Caroline Drive to Somerset Square Park located off Stokes Avenue.
- Safety improvements to Mary Avenue from the Don Burnett Bicycle-Pedestrian Bridge to Stevens Creek Boulevard and the Stevens Creek Boulevard crossing of State Route 85. These improvements are important, but should not be considered part of the Stevens Creek Trail. The State Route 85/Stevens Creek Blvd. interchange is not appropriate for the wide range of cycling abilities that currently use the Stevens Creek Trail in Mountain View and Cupertino.
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements along Foothill Expressway/Foothill Blvd. between Vineyard Drive and Cristo Rey Drive. These improvements are important, but should not be considered part of the Stevens Creek Trail. The expressway environment is not appropriate for the wide range of cycling abilities that currently use the Stevens Creek Trail in Mountain View and Cupertino.

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### **d. Trail Connection to Rancho San Antonio County Park and Open Space Preserve**

- A pedestrian/bike path that extends along the north side of Stevens Creek Boulevard west from Stonebridge to undeveloped open space land behind the Gate of Heaven Cemetery is recommended to provide access to Rancho San Antonio County Park. This alignment would include a pedestrian/bike bridge over the UPRR tracks to provide a connection to the Hammond-Snyder Loop Trail in Rancho San Antonio County Park. This route is viewed as an important recreational amenity for the community and could be developed as a stand-alone project.
- A trail staging area with parking, restrooms and signage is recommended. The additional parking area would provide a more convenient access into Rancho San Antonio County Park and would also help reduce parking demand at the busy Rancho San Antonio parking lots.





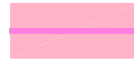



### **3. Additional Recommendations**

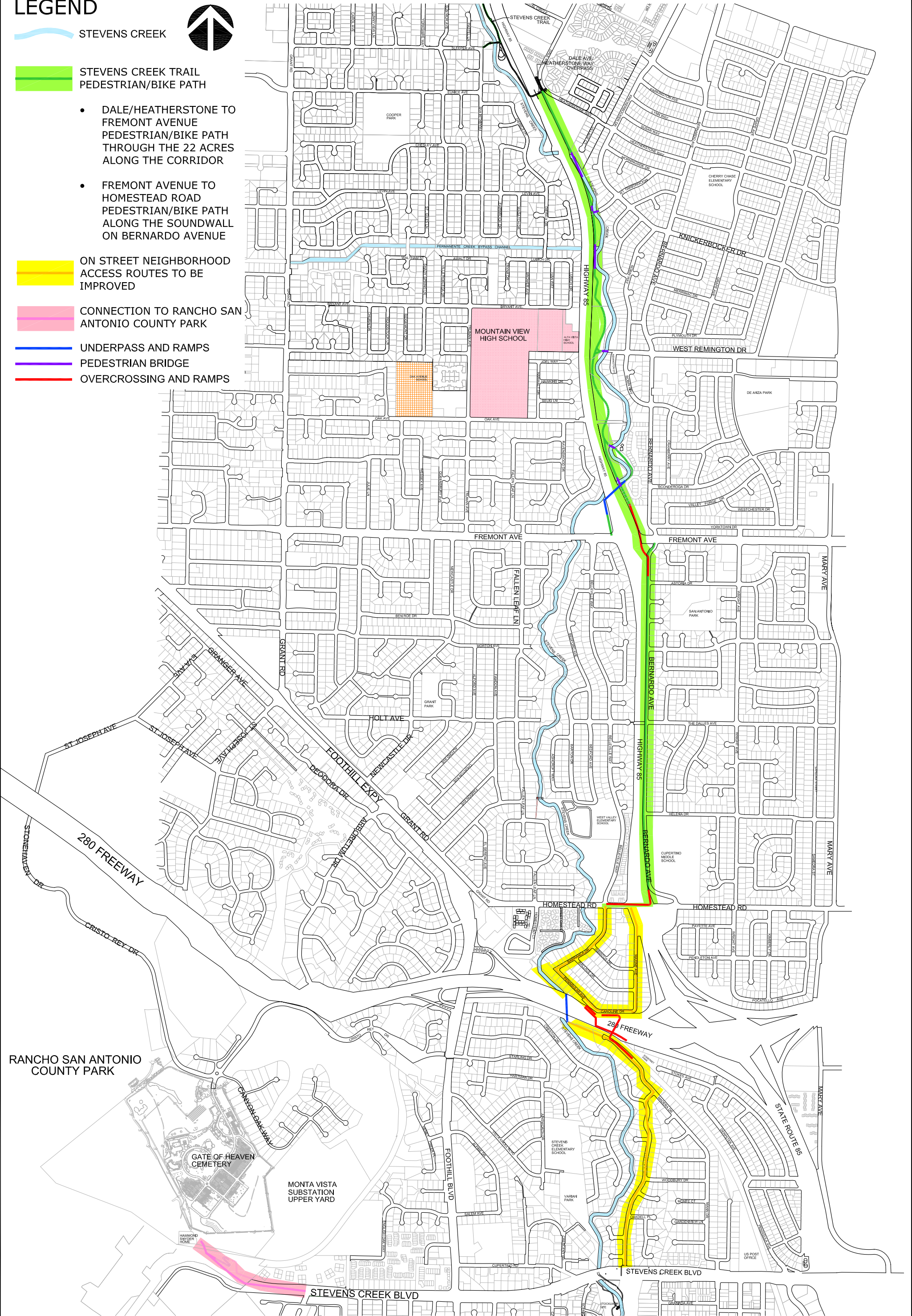
- Encourage the Joint Cities Working Team to continue to collaborate throughout the trail planning and development process.
- Continue to seek long-term opportunities to make the creek corridor publically accessible.
- Retain all publicly owned land along the creek corridor.
- Connect the Stevens Creek Trail to a trail using the UPRR corridor when and if this land becomes available.

The feasibility study is the first step in a trail planning process. The feasible alignments identified in the Stevens Creek Trail Feasibility Study report provide a range of choices for decision makers to consider for extending and improving connections to the trail. The next step is an evaluation of the study findings, the public input and the Citizens Working Group recommendations by the Four Cities Working Team. This will be followed by presentations to the four respective city councils. The next step would involve the development of a trail master plan for the alignments selected by the four city councils. A trail master plan would be evaluated under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). All future trail planning and environmental review will provide opportunities for public involvement.



LEGEND

-  STEVENS CREEK
- 
-  STEVENS CREEK TRAIL  
PEDESTRIAN/BIKE PATH
- DALE/HEATHERSTONE TO FREMONT AVENUE  
PEDESTRIAN/BIKE PATH  
THROUGH THE 22 ACRES  
ALONG THE CORRIDOR
  - FREMONT AVENUE TO HOMESTEAD ROAD  
PEDESTRIAN/BIKE PATH  
ALONG THE SOUNDWALL  
ON BERNARDO AVENUE
-  ON STREET NEIGHBORHOOD  
ACCESS ROUTES TO BE  
IMPROVED
-  CONNECTION TO RANCHO SAN  
ANTONIO COUNTY PARK
-  UNDERPASS AND RAMPS
-  PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
-  OVERCROSSING AND RAMPS



STEVENS CREEK TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY  
CITIZENS WORKING GROUP PREFERRED ALIGNMENT